

RANGE EXTENSION OF *TRIONYX SPINIFERUS EMORYI* INTO UTAH (REPTILIA)

Carlos Y. Roby¹ and Earl C. Loveless¹

ABSTRACT.— Four Texas Spiny Softshell Turtles (*Trionyx spiniferus emoryi*) were collected near St. George, Utah. This represents a range extension of 65 km northward into Utah from Nevada.

Of the six subspecies of *Trionyx spinifer* in the United States, only the Texas Spiny Softshell Turtle, *Trionyx spiniferus emoryi* (Agassiz), is known to occur in the Colorado River drainage. Miller (Copeia 1946:46) suggested that the species was introduced into this area around the turn of the century when a dam of an artificially stocked pond on a ranch in Grant County, New Mexico, gave way. This permitted the softshell access to the Gila River, a tributary of the Colorado River.

On 24 July 1976, four *T. s. emoryi* were collected in a small pond within 50 m of the Virgin River, approximately 6 km (4 mi) north of St. George, Utah. The specimens include three females and one male (deposited at Brigham Young University, BYU

41646-9), with plastral lengths of 12.20, 11.0, 9.5, and 9.1 cm. Seven others were sighted in this pond and thirteen others in the Virgin River.

This represents a northern extension of the known range (Webb, 1962, Univ. Kansas Publ. Mus. Nat. Hist. 13(10):429-611) of approximately 65 km (40 mi) from the previous record 2 km (1.5 mi) above Mesquite, Clarke County, Nevada, and a total extension of approximately 720 km (450 mi) since its introduction into the Gila River. We wish to thank Dr. Andrew H. Barnum for his assistance and the Associated Students of Brigham Young University for funding this project. We also thank Dr. Wilmer W. Tanner for his suggestions.

¹Life Sciences Museum, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah 84602.